AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

One such challenge relates to management of welding consumables (*e.g.*, wire, gas, flux, contact tip and/or consumable electrode). Conventionally, welding consumables are often tracked and ordered by operators or supervisors responsible for the welding process. This generally involves manually inventorying and keeping track of projected production needs and then ordering supplies long enough in advance so that production may continue. Manual processes such as [[are]] those involved with ordering and inventory activities are time consuming and often require duplication of efforts by multiple people and departments. When orders are finally placed, mistakes can occur as catalog and/or part numbers are given to suppliers. Additionally, suppliers and distributors often have trouble planning for expected demands, since knowledge of actual product usage may not be gained until the order is actually placed.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

For example, a supplier of welding consumables can maintain an inventory of welding consumables at a customer location (*e.g.*, ownership of welding consumables remains with supplier—Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI)). At least in part based upon information obtained from the consumable(s) monitor 215 through the welder 210, the remote system (*e.g.*, supplier's computer system) can allocate and/or charge the customer for welding consumable(s) once they have been used by the customer. This can result in decreased costs to the customer associated with maintaining inventory since the customer is not charged for the welding consumable(s) until the consumable(s) has been used. Further, the customer can delegate to the supplier responsibility for maintaining inventory of welding consumable(s) at the customer location, thus reducing the customer's costs associated with materials management.

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